What are the steps taken to provide a suitable market place, which can also function as an information centre, for women entrepreneurs in a prime location for selling their product without having to take the help of middlemen?

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN : I appreciate the anxiety of the hon. Member that the SSI should work for the upliftment of women.

Sir, this Ministry has a programme for encouraging entrepreneurship of one lakh women for this year through NGOs. Recently, this programme has been initiated in Ahmedabad through a famous organisation called SEWA. This programme will continue.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, due to time constraint I would like to put up my point in brief. I would like to give an example about the anomalies. There are hundreds of units of refined oil and hydrogeneted oil as well. The Government has withdrawn duty on hydrogeneted oil. Oil is also helpful in making soap.

[English]

Excise Duty Structure

*134. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have noticed any bottle-necks in the existing excise duty structure;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the steps proposed to be taken to revamp the excise duty structure in the country?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b). The present central excise duty structure is still characterised by multiplicity of tax rates, including ad-valorem and specific rates of duty; existence of a number of exemptions which are based on different criteria and; multiple nature of commodity taxes collected as basic excise duty, additional excise duty levied on specified products and various cesses also collected as additional excise duty under different enactments.

(c) Reform of the tax structure is a continuous and on-going process. A number of measures have been taken in the recent past to rationalise and simplify the excise duty structure and make it more transparent. These include reduction in the dispersal of rates, replacement of specific rates of duty with ad valorem rates on a number of commodities, withdrawal of a large number of enduse based exemptions, extension of modvat scheme to petroleum products, capital goods, and processed textile fabrics and simplification of procedures. The Government is committed to further push forward this process of reform.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : In case of hydrogeneted oil production, refined oil of the same quality has been exempted from duty but you have imposed heavy duty on the soap stock which is made in the hydrogeneted oil Unit simultaneously. There are so many anomalies of this type. If you have received such representations, will you remove these anomalies? Secondly, there are so many complications in excise duty that decisions of all collectors are different.

[English]

This is at the stage of production of refining the oil.

[Translation]

What will you do to simplify it?

MR. SPEAKER : Please ask the question.

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : There are two questions (a) and (b). There are two rates of taxes on the same product.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Shri Banwari Lal is a good friend of mine.

Now, how can I answer when a question is related to excise duty? The question is on Excise Duty Structure...*(Interruptions)* Yes, there are thousands of products including hydrogenated oil and refined oil. I will look into it and come back to you...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : I have quoted an example, Sir...*(Interruptions)* I can quote hundreds of examples. This is only one of them...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Listen to the answer, Shri Banwariji.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : If there are two rates of duties, what according to you, is on the same product, certainly that is an anomaly and it has to be removed. But I will have to look into the matter whether the products you are mentioning are one and the same or two different products and come back to you and tell you why there are two rates of duties and taxes.

MR. SPEAKER : Do you have any supplementary?

(Interruptions)

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : My second question is that there are various difficulties. What steps is the Government going to take to simplify the Excise Act duties? This is the main question. It is a very complicated Act. We do not understand.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : In my Budget Speech, I have said that reforms on excise is high on our agenda.

We have reduced the number of duties and the number of rates. We will again reduce the number of rates. But Excise Duty Act provisions have not been taken up. We have only taken up Income-Tax Act and Company Law. Let that be finished, then I would attend to the Excise Duties Act.

[Translation]

SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, please ask the hon'ble Minister to reply the question put up by Shri Banwari Lal Purohit.

[English]

Agro based Industries

*136. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the details of proposals received by Government regarding setting up of agro-based industries with foreign investment in each State of the country during the last three years,

(b) the details of the proposals approved and the number of proposals implemented so far; and

(c) the reasons for delay in implementation of the approved proposals?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) A total of 461 number of proposals envisaging foreign direct investment of Rs. 6536.50 crores in the Agro-based Industries comprising of Sugar, Paper & Pulp, Food Processing Industries, Vegetable Oils & Vanaspati and Horticulture/Agriculture/Floriculture and Fermentation Industries have been approved during the last 3 years. The State-wise details of these proposals approved during the last 3 years viz. 1994, 1995 and 1996 (upto 30-9-96) are given in the Annexure.

(b) and (c). Implementation details of foreign investment projects are not centrally maintained. Monitoring of the project is primarily done by the State Government since commissioning of most projects depends upon various State level clearances including land, power etc. and gestation period which varies from project to project.

ANNEXURE

Statewise Report for Foreign Direct Investment Cases Approved for Agro based Industries during the Period 1994, 1995 and 1996 (Upto Sept.)

(Rs. in Crores)

State	1994		1995		1996	
	No.	Inves.	No.	Inves.	No.	Inves.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Others (Location not Indicated)	8	366.20	15	558.94	18	3023.69
Maharashtra	29	279.54	28	61.04	13	30.14
Delhi	5	99.53	7	52.32	1	1.40
Madhya Pradesh	6	80.74	4	15.79	5	465.83
Andhra Pradesh	16	30.22	35	135.26	12	462.81
Karnataka	14	23.11	23	31.01	12	13.22
Uttar Pradesh	10	28.38	11	57.08	12	139.89
Haryana	15	17.82	23	39.50	8	35.42
Chandigarh	2	9.02	-	-	-	-
Gujarat	6	8.03	9	95.3	7	159.40
Punjab	4	7.42	2	4.26	3	2.72
Tamil Nadu	14	9.81	25	24.28	14	34.57
West Bengal	3	3.02	6	8.67	4	59.22
Rajasthan	4	1.96	7	18.58	2	5.47
Himachal Pradesh	3	9.40	1	1.20	-	-
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1.07	-	-	-	-